

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A gaming machine comprising:
 - a variable display section for variably displaying a plurality of types of symbols required for gaming;
 - 5 a starting device for starting variable display of the symbols;
 - a stopping device for stopping the symbols being variably displayed;
 - a profit provision device for providing a player with profits if a combination of symbols constitutes a predetermined winning mode when the symbols are stopped and displayed;
- 10 an image display device for displaying information about a game;
- a sound generation device for generating a sound relevant to a game; and
- 15 a control device for electrically controlling the variable display section, the starting device, the stopping device, the profit provision device, the image display device, and the sound generation device on the basis of a hierarchical processing structure, the control device including
 - a main control device for controlling a first hierarchical level, which is a highest hierarchical processing level of the gaming machine,
 - 20 an intermediate control device for controlling a second hierarchical level situated lower than the first hierarchical level, under control of the main control device, and
 - a lower control device for controlling a third hierarchical level situated lower than the second hierarchical level, under control of the intermediate control device.

2. The gaming machine according to claim 1, wherein
 - 25 the control device performs processing for making a decision pertaining to the player's profits;
 - the lower control device controls an image display to be performed by the image display device; and

the intermediate control device performs control operations other than those to be performed by the lower control device.

3. The gaming machine according to claim 2, wherein the intermediate control device performs control operations including a sound generation control operation to be performed by the sound generation device.

4. The gaming machine according to claim 1, wherein the intermediate control means is controlled in accordance with a command code transmitted from the main control means, and the lower control means is controlled in accordance with a command code transmitted from the intermediate control means.

10 5. The gaming machine according to claim 1, wherein the lower control device comprises a plurality of control boards specialized for specific control processing operations.

6. The gaming machine according to claim 5, wherein the lower control means is equipped with a lamp control board.

15 7. The gaming machine according to claim 2, wherein the lower control device comprises a plurality of control boards specialized for specific control processing operations.

8. The gaming machine according to claim 7, wherein the lower control means is equipped with a control board having mounted thereon at least an image control CPU and character ROM.

20 9. A gaming machine comprising:
variable display means for variably displaying a plurality of types of symbols required for gaming;

25 starting means for starting variable display of the symbols;
stopping means for stopping the symbols being variably displayed;
profit provision means for providing a player with profits if a combination of symbols constitutes a predetermined winning mode when the symbols are stopped and displayed;

image display means for displaying information about a game;
sound generation means for generating a sound relevant to a game; and
control means for electrically controlling the variable display means, the

starting means, the stopping means, the profit provision means, the image display
means, and the sound generation means on the basis of a hierarchical processing
structure, the control means including

main control means for controlling a first hierarchical level, which is
a highest hierarchical processing level of the gaming machine,

intermediate control means for controlling a second hierarchical level
situated lower than the first hierarchical level, under control of the main control
means, and

lower control means for controlling a third hierarchical level situated
lower than the second hierarchical level, under control of the intermediate control
means.